

As CR Negotiations Continue Democrats Wonder: What are the GOP's Priorities?

Democrats agree that we must reduce spending, but we must do so without costing jobs and undermining our economic recovery. But Speaker Boehner said today that Republicans “are going to fight for H.R. 1,” a bill that non-partisan experts say [threatens jobs](#) and American competitiveness by cutting:

Our ability to build a competitive workforce and out-educate our competitors:

- More than 200,000 children would be kicked out of Head Start and thousands of teachers would lose their jobs
- Reduces maximum Pell Grant awards by \$800 per student

Our nation's ability to remain the world leader in cutting-edge fields and out-innovate our competitors:

- 20,000 fewer researchers supported at the National Science Foundation
- \$1.4 billion reduction in science and energy research to spur the innovations that will drive the clean energy economy of the future and create jobs.
- \$1.6 billion in cuts to the National Institutes of Health, representing a significant setback in cancer and other disease research

Our infrastructure, weakening our ability to help businesses grow and to out-build our competitors:

- Rescinds \$2.5 billion for high-speed rail projects already awarded
- Loss of 25,000 new construction jobs and the cancellation of 76 projects in 40 states
- \$234 million in cuts to improve our nation's air traffic control system

And funding to strengthen national security:

- Results in almost 900 fewer Border Patrol agents, guaranteeing funding for only 20,500 agents
- Cuts funding for border security fencing, infrastructure, and technology by \$272 million below FY 2010
- Cuts Homeland Security grants to train and equip first responders by \$101 million, Port Security grants by \$192 million or 67 percent and Transit Security grants by \$177 million or 70 percent

Democrats have made clear our willingness to compromise, and that we do not want a government shutdown. Meanwhile members of the Tea Party and some Republicans are rallying outside the Capitol to declare any compromise a sell-out.

“Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) rallied Tea Party activists outside the U.S. Capitol Thursday, pledging to not back down in the current budget standoff. ‘Cutting \$61 billion, in my opinion, is a starting point,’ Bachmann said. ‘It is not the goal.’” [The Hill, [03/31/11](#)]

“Also Thursday, several veteran Republicans spoke to a gathering of 200 or so tea party supporters in an event near the Capitol. Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) said compromising with Democrats would send a signal of weakness on what he considered the paramount issue of spending and debt... He finished his speech with, ‘Let’s go pick a fight!’” [Washington Post, [03/31/11](#)]

“More than a dozen Republican Members this week reiterated their support for the six-month House bill that cuts \$61 billion in federal spending. And they said they may not back a compromise with Senate Democrats and the White House that calls for smaller reductions. If too many Republicans dig in, and no deal is reached, the government would shut down April 9. ‘Sixty-one billion is a compromise,’ Rep. Paul Broun (R-Ga.) said Wednesday. ‘I’m not going to go below that.’” [Roll Call, [3/31/11](#)]

“It’s not like Republicans need a reminder of the tensions within their own ranks on government spending cuts. But if they forget what’s at stake, all GOP lawmakers need to do Thursday is walk outside the Capitol, where perhaps hundreds of tea party protesters will be urging congressional leaders to hold their ground on major spending cuts...To some extent, Republicans have themselves to blame for the spending cut hype: In the run-up to the 2010 elections, they promised \$100 billion in spending reductions — a symbolic number that many in leadership have begun to regret.” [Politico, [3/31/11](#)]

“Some conservative House Republicans — led by freshmen who came to Washington on a promise to shrink the government — have said they would vote against any proposal that falls short of the \$61 billion in reductions the House approved on a party-line vote last month. Senate Democrats immediately rejected that measure... House Republicans fear that many rank-and-file GOP lawmakers could view a deal with Democrats as a retreat.” [Washington Post, [3/31/11](#)]

The Republican leadership needs to work with Democrats in order to pass a compromise measure that will cut spending while investing in Americans’ priorities – not waste time with plans to bring their failed bill to the Floor for a second, symbolic vote tomorrow.

“The move appeared to be purely symbolic, because like the previous Republican bill, it would have to win approval from a Democratic Senate and White House that have already rejected it... The plan was quickly derided by both Democrats and Senate Republicans, however, who responded by offering a civics lesson to their House colleagues. Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) said: ‘To be the law of the land, a bill has to pass the Senate and be signed by the president.’” [The Hill, [03/31/11](#)]

“At the same time, GOP leaders vowed to take up a measure this week that would make the \$61 billion spending-cut measure the default plan if the Senate fails to act by April 6. That bill is symbolic at best because the Senate would not pass it, nor would President Barack Obama sign it.” [Roll Call, [03/31/11](#)]

“...the proposal raises all manner of constitutional and practical questions. First, it would effectively deem a prior bill passed, even though it did not clear the Senate or win the president's signature. Second, it's unclear why or whether Republicans think the Senate and president would accept the so-called ‘Government Shutdown Prevention Act’ when they didn't approve the initial House plan.” [Fox, [3/30/11](#)]